

# TOWN OF CONCORD PERSONNEL BOARD MINUTES FEBRUARY 8, 2023

Select Board's Room, Town House & Videoconference

#### 1. Call to Order

Bill: 5:17 pm 2/8/2023 Call to order

Roll Call: Joe Emerick absent. Kate Ryan and Liz Cobbs on zoom. Bill Mracheck and Nancy Crowley in the room.

Other Attendees: Lauren Baretta, Mark Howell, Ned Perry, Anita Tekle

### Note:

These minutes are not a transcript or verbatim – statements have been rephrased & summarized.

- 2. Minutes Approval as available
- 3. Classification & Compensation Study Update
- Progress to date and anticipated timeline for next steps

#### 4. Classification Actions

• Allocation of new/restructured positions to classifications

Bill: We will handle the classification actions first. Amy, could you introduce the topic.

Amy: Amy: So, there are reclassification actions required. We've been trying to figure out what we can bring forward to this meeting because the next meeting will be too late. There are a few departments that have a current need (e.g., due to retirements). We'd prefer not to leave the positions empty I've got 3-4 requests that relate to redesign or reposition that need to be managed now. We recognize that there is in the old system and very soon a new system. Ideally, we would only be working under the new plan, but we do need to keep going to fill positions. We are trying to understand both where these positions would sit in the old system, but also potentially where they would fit in the new system.

So we are considering 3 draft job descriptions and these job descriptions need to be edited later, but do need a classification level now. As they stand, these job description drafts align with what is requested by the Town Manager. The Town Manager is ultimately to have responsibility for these positions, but the Personnel Board does have responsibility for the classification and the salary grade for each position.

First one is in the finance department. A position in finance which has previously been in the role of administrative assistant. They are seeking to merge positions from the facilities department and ithe finance department. But the new CFO (Gayle) has been in the role since September and has requested that this position fall in finance. She is seeking to bring these positions together, under Finance. We have looked at the current classification system and I clearly believe it is an AC-5 position. This role would work closely with the CFO and that leads to a more complex position. It would also take on support for many committees. I recommend that this position be classified to the existing title as "Sr. Administrative Assistant as AC-5". If you choose to do that, it does not need to go to Town Meeting, as it is an existing classification level and title, then it does not have to go to Town Meeting.

**Nancy**: It is not a brand new job description?

**Amy**: Yes, we have Sr. Administrative Assistant positions. Gayle has come in as the CFO and is reassessing the organization she oversees. You will see some common language with some additions. Gayle, anything I've missed?

**Gayle**: I just want to add that this role will support two departments. They will be taking on roles for Facilities as well as Finance.

Nancy: And do you have someone in mind for this position?

**Gayle:** We have been interviewing for this position but with the hope that it would be approved through this process.

Bill: Any questions from Kate or Liz?

**Liz:** Yes, Thank you. First, Gayle, it is difficult to hear your responses. Nancy, brought up that there was an older job description and a decision to restructure in the Finance Department?

**Amy:** Yes, there was an administrative assistant position in the Finance group, but it was not filled. So Gayle has revamped the description with responsibilities for two departments.

Liz: Does it mean that the person would report to two different people, or just to you, Gayle?

**Gayle**: Thew would report only to me, not split responsibilities although they are to support both departments.

Liz: So they would only "help out" with facilities?

**Gayle:** Yes would report only to me, but would assist with several joint committees and with procurement, bill schedules, for Facilities as well as Finance.

**Amy**: Facilities director reports to Gayle, so the departments are directly linked.

**Liz:** It can be challenging to outline objectives when there is such a broad scope. If I understand correctly, they would not have a finance degree, nor be expected to have a college degree?

**Amy:** Actually, we should change this to an "equivalent to a bachelor's degree" for a Sr. Admin.

Gayle: I would work with the individual to set clear objectives so there will not be any confusion.

**Liz**: it sounds like you have already identified the candidate? Does that candidate indeed have an "equivalent bachelor's degree"?

**Amy**: I don't think we should be discussing specific candidates here.

**Liz**: Well, the process we are following is a bit upended, isn't it? We have a request to approve a job description when we've been told that the job is nearly filled already. Given that, it seems to have opened up the need for this line of questioning.

**Amy:** There was advertising going on at the lower level position. We have to respect candidate confidentiality.

Bill: Liz, I'm not sure that this answered your question?

**Liz**: I do understand that it's expected that I don't ask these questions, but I do want it on record that I feel we've gotten the cart before the horse on this one—if the candidate selection has progressed that far, then I'm not really sure what the role for the Personnel Board is on this one.

Gayle: The position has been posted, so we have been having discussion with individuals about this role.

**Liz**: But not with an accelerated AC-5 recommended position as we are being asked to approve here tonight. Given that this is just coming to us now, then I'd assume that you were reviewing candidates for the lower level position—a different role than the one presented here. This is an updated job description, correct?

**Gayle**: We have been in discussions with an individual. We are not able to finalize the interviews until we , hopefully, have approval on this AC-5 position. We've not been able to progress further without this approval.

**Amy:** I would say that we are in a bit of a bind, as we are trying to fill positions in a tight labor market, and it is not in the best form to bring to the Personnel Board. But because the Board cannot meet again until March, I face a dilemma to fit in everything in a difficult time period.

Nancy: And this in a draft only, so it will be modified?

**Amy:** Yes. When we talk to the "equivalent of a bachelors degree" we will consider people without one, just assessing that they have some experience "equivalent to" so we always look at that combination of experience and education. That qualification can be achieved a number of ways.

**Bill:** Kate, do you have any points?

**Kate:** I want to confirm that we only have authority to approve the salary grade and classification. No role to oversee the job description?

Amy: Yes.

Kate: My only question is to confirm that the job is combining two roles across two departments?

**Gayle**: Yes, that is right. Since I began in September, I was assessing the roles in each department under me. So, I was looking for ways to have efficiency, with procurement roles up to me from Facilities, so it seems reasonable to roll those responsibilities up to this one position. Also, looking at more analytic work to support procurement overall, so this makes more logical sense.

**Kate**: Thank you, that is helpful. One more question: The grade recommendation: an old position, but combined with other work—are there similar AC-5 roles, where you've combined roles across departments elsewhere?

**Amy**: There are similar functions, but not sure that there are roles that combine across departments.

**Amy**: There is a similar role in Light Plant that also supported the IT and Broadband Operations. We have had this position, another one that wrapped in Minuteman Media. Yes, it has happened before.

**Liz:** I think there was a meeting with GovHR yesterday—did you look at where this position and where it might fit in the new system?

**Amy**: we did not discuss this level of detail with GovHR. The new plan is still in development, so not clear how this would be impacted. But from what I've seen so far, this role would be comparable to where it would be situated under the new plan.

Bill: Liz, does that answer your question?

**Liz**: Yes, for that question that helps. Going back to the earlier series of questions—if you've been interviewing under the old position—it was an AC-4 Administrative Assistant role. Now, those people who were considered and had applied under the former classification are to be considered under the newly classified AC-5 position.

**Amy**: We are reposting or looking internally so we'd assess based on what the final classification is. But certainly, if we

**Bill:** So does that mean that you will repost?

**Amy**: I think we'll do an internal posting.

Bill: What does that mean?

Amy: Meaning that we'll only look for internal candidates. We'd alert internal people only.

**Bill:** But you'd have to repost at AC-5 level.

**Bill**: I have a couple of questions: Are these positions co-located.

**Gayle**: They are not.

**Bill**: Okay, so that presents some issues. Where would they be located?

Gayle: They would be seated outside my office, with the ability to go sit in the Facilities offices also.

Bill: Where is the Facilities offices located?

Gayle: Knox Trail

**Bill:** So, there was a person doing this job in Facilities.

**Gayle:** Since I 've been here, there is no one in the role, and it's only been filled with temporary people.

Bill: Somebody has been doing this job?

**Gayle:** Yes, me.

**Bill:** Okay, but my point is that you have decided that one person should do what two people were tasked to do before, so could you explain your thinking?

**Gayle**: My thinking was to streamline the work across the two departments that work on procurement under me. My thought was to streamline my own department and have one central person organizing ordering, payroll, attendance, etc. Efficiency in streamlining the work.

Bill: Ok. When was the position budgeted, in the last fiscal year?

Amy: it was budgeted originally several years ago.

**Bill**: So when the position was budgeted for, then the Town Manager must have approved it at some point, around the time it was budgeted for.

**Amy**: not necessarily, it would be more connected to when the position is filled vs. when the position was approved.

**Kellie**: There was a conscious decision to allow the next CFO to attend to the organizational structure when that next person would be on the job. Fortunately, we've found Gayle as our new CFO, and I believe that this is the right way to go and it's important to put the right person in the role. We have some great people working for the town, and it is important to have them working at the right level.

Bill: So there was a budget allocated to the AC-4 position.

Amy: Correct.

**Bill**: So now we are changing the payroll, increasing to AC-5. I'm trying to understand the workings of the budget and the Finance Committee—what does the Finance Committee need to be informed of; it seems there is some wriggle room on this issue.

**Gayle**: Specifically, where there are two positions combined into one position, then one thing I've gone through is to understand that we would have the funding because we're combining the two.

**Bill:** But there were two AC-4 positions one in Facilities, one in Finance. What happens to the person sitting in the AC-4 position in the Facilities Department. What will be the process here?

**Amy**: within the budget, I think you are saying that when the budget is set out, it must align the budget needs with the town.

**Gayle**: So at annual Town Meeting, there will be an appropriation for salary budgets. If we don't go over that budget, then there is no need to go back to the Finance Committee.

**Amy**: The Finance Committee does not get into detail on each position. For example, \$500 in office supplies are built into the budget, but it is not specifically called out, but as long as we work within the appropriated budget, then it proceeds without another review by the Finance Committee.

**Bill:** What I'm looking at is a higher level —where we understand how an organization is to be staffed, that should be done all in one. Tonight, we're asked to look at one position and it seems haphazardly done, without an understanding of what an organization is to look like overall. Perhaps it's not the role of the Personnel Board, perhaps not relevant for this committee, but it should be done.

**Amy**: The Town Manager, the CFO, that whole process to understand the level of service needed. We do have positions that just can't change so we take advantage of changes as they come, e.g. retirements, so that we can make things more efficient. It may seem haphazard, but that is the process that has happened here. During the budget process, there were a number of staffing positions that were requested but were not agreed to by the Town Manager.

**Gayle**: As I came into this role, I took on responsibility as CFO and in my department; I've been looking for ways to streamline the staff and it's been a well thought-out process, responding to changes.

**Bill**: You have still one open question: the person in the AC-4 role in Facilities, that person will be impacted by this change. So that person, you will have to find a "home" for that person.

**Amy**: It's an AC-3 position, but yes, it is filled. And again, it's difficult to talk about the individuals but we should be only talking about the classification situation here.

**Bill:** Well, not to belabor the point, but it does seem to me that there is a role for the Personnel Board in discussions about manpower planning that would make the process more efficient.

Kate: No questions.

**Liz:** No more questions, but appreciate this last line of questioning.

**Nancy**: So we are being asked to approve the draft?

Amy: It is to approve the classification—to add a classification of AC-5, senior administrative assistant.

**Nancy**: When it came down to the communication: sometimes you will get someone with less of an education, but someone who, through experience, can do an excellent job. It would be important not to lose good candidates due to a strict education requirement.

**Amy**: We have been progressively changing our education descriptions so that we are more open in this part of our job descriptions.

**Bill**: So let's entertain the motion to approve the position.

#### > VOTE:

Nancy: I make a motion that we approve the draft Sr. Administrative Assistant role.

Kate: Second.

Kate: I vote Yes.

Liz: Vote no, I don't think the timing is appropriate to what we are trying to accomplish, so I vote no.

Bill: Yes.

**Bill**: So, it's passed with a three to one vote. Let's move on to the next position.

Amy: The second position is "Administrative and Operations Supervisor." Again, the timing is not ideal, but I'm presenting this in draft form. I don't want to hold up the Sr. Services division from moving forward. We'll do some wordsmithing here, but regarding the education and experience could be equivalent to a bachelor's degree. The recommendation is classify this position as an MP-2 in the current system with the title "Administrative and Operations Supervisor". This position would replace what we'd budgeted as an assistant position and shift focus to capabilites. This also comes when we have a new Director, Lauren Barretta. She has been an internal promotion, which is terrific. Lauren feels it would make more sense and the Town Manager has also agreed to this organization structure. I will pause for questions.

Bill: Nancy, do you want to start?

**Nancy:** I go to the center, it's very busy and I do see Lauren there. There is a lot going on there. Citizens in town; many are seniors so more and more are coming to the Center so getting extra help is important.

**Kate:** I see that the current role is MP-3, but it would go down to an MP-2 and I wonder why? The duties are changing so much that it's to be moved down?

**Amy:** Kellie and I have been thinking about that. This role would be more in the office and operations role—and less to do with social services. Given the timing with the next classification system, we felt this would be more appropriate. It could be explored later, where the new classification system would assess the duties in this position. Without care management for people, this is why we've classified it here.

Kate: This position is currently vacant?

Amy: Yes.

Bill: has this been posted yet?

Amy: No, not yet.

**Liz:** It's a reclassified position—it would go to MP-2 grade.

Amy: Yes.

**Bill:** in the Human Services, how many employees?

Amy: Hard to count, but in Sr. Services, there would be 16 positions, but FTE is now 11.9.

**Lauren:** We have two vacancies at the moment.

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Bill: How many would report to this position?

Lauren: Two administrative positions, a full time custodian and 4 part-time van drivers.

**Bill:** Let's have a motion to approve.

#### > VOTE:

**Nancy:** I make a motion that we approve the "administrative and operations supervisor "reporting to the Director in the Senior Services organization, at salary grade MP-2.

**Kate**: I second.

Kate: Yes Liz: Yes Nancy: Yes. Bill: Yes.

**Bill:** Ok, let's move to the third position.

Amy: I recommend that we move forward with the Environmental Health and Safety Manager. This is a budgeted position; they would like to use the funds to create a different position that is needed under the new organization. We have not posted this yet, but are anxious to do so. We are looking at the grade MP-4. This will be a bit trickier under the new plan and where this would sit under the new classification and compensation plan, especially in regard to the salary range. I don't have notable edits, but more edits to this draft would be necessary before we finalize the position.

**Bill:** I'll start—this was budgeted before and at what level?

**Aaron Miklosko:** Originally, we budgeted for an MP-5 position but now we are looking at MP-4. That covers the FY 23 budget. About 8 months ago, we started looking for an Environmental Services Coordinator and lowered the salary range at that time to an MP-4 position. Previously, it was an Environmental Services Manager at MP-5, but now we've reassessed. I'd also note that the much of the salary comes from a solid waste enterprise fund so would not impact the general fund budget. It is at the higher point in the range, so if it should be MP-4 or MP-5 perhaps will need discussion. About the role itself, Environmental Compliance and employee safety is the most required work.

**Bill:** would this role have any direct reports?

**Aaron**: no direct reports, but would support and work with people across public works in an advisory role

**Bill:** And how many people currently report to the Public Works Director?

**Aaron:** There are 5 positions currently reporting to me and this would be a sixth.

**Bill**: Kate, do you have any questions?

**Kate**: No additional questions.

**Liz**: No additional questions. Just my overall concern with this piece on the agenda is in relation to the new classification and compensation system that is coming to completion. I'm not really sure that I have

all the information I'd need to understand why these requests are coming forward now, but that's where we are tonight.

Nancy: one question: this is a vacant position. But would they also have the previous role's duties?

**Aaron:** No, the previous role was focused on the recycling program and this before you is more focused on employee safety. The curbside recycling program is now assigned to myself and the assistant superintendent in a shared system.

Nancy: I think this role is key for the town's employees.

**Aaron:** I agree and this kind of position is coming forward in many other communities across Massachusetts as well, with new laws that have been put in place.

**Aaron:** In the past, we've had money to hire consulting firms to review our safety protocols, but now we see it as a necessarily full time position.

Bill: Lessons learned, it was a short-term plan and now you are looking more long-term?

**Aaron:** Yes, in the past we've had more short-term positions and we have investigated what would be the right qualifications for this role before we brought this job description here. My director and I have spent many hours to understand how to improve the multiple short-term hires and make this role more robust.

Bill: That sounds great, thank you. Now, a motion to

## > VOTE:

**Nancy:** I would like to propose a motion that we agree to this new position for an Environmental Health and Safety Manager, reporting to the Public Works Director at salary grade MP-4.

Kate: I second.

Bill: votes? Kate: yes Liz: Yes Nancy: Yes, Bill: Yes.

**Bill:** Let's move back to agenda item 3, an update on the new Classification & Compensation study, with an update?

**Kellie**: Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the GovHR work on the new Classification and Compensation program. We've been reviewing a lot of information for the past couple of months. It's been taking more time than expected, but we hope that the job analysis phase that took so long will benefit us in the long run.

- Complex, largest project for GovHR.
- Amy and I have been working on internal equity.
- We needed first to look at the foundations to make sure we were on board.

- We met yesterday with the Sr. Management to review the progress to date. It might be the first time that Sr. Management has seen the Classification and Compensation system.
- The project Schedule is provided in the package. There is one change: we are scheduling for 2/21 for the employee meetings with GovHR.
- Personnel Board is able to attend the Employee presentation meetings. There will be two
  meetings on 2/21 and the meetings will be recorded and shared also. It will be an opportunity to
  talk about the system and the methodologies and how the current system will fit in the new
  one. SO the 2/21 will be a milestong, and then the Public Hearing on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The employee
  feedback will be important also.
  - o February 21<sup>st</sup>: meetings with employees
  - General letter to go out to employees on 2/21
- Joellen is willing to meet with employees, and has been working with us directly. I think it might be her largest project and it's so complex.
- The next phase of the project will look at internal equity.
- And all that will be completed before the 2/27 Select Board Public Hearing Presentation.
- Joellen is also willing to meet with the Personnel Board as needed.
- March 8-next Personnel Board meeting, and then after that the final report will come after that .
- We want to be sure that there is time for the employees to respond.
- We want to have information in the next FinCom report and by March 8<sup>th</sup> Personnel Board meeting, we'll
- The Benefits portion of the project had to be pushed out because it's so complex and we need time to talk with employees.
- So the schedule of events is important to show you the project schedule. With three articles on the warrant that will be sent out to everyone in Town. We are talking here about the Article 5.
- There will be 3 articles (4,5,6) sent along to Town Meeting.
- We know this is so complicated and there is a lot of confusing detail, so please let me help you understand things.

**Amy**: Article 5: new classification and Article 6: amendment to the current system, with a 3% salary range increase opportunity.

**Kellie**: Thank you for the clarification. I know that the Town Manager, Amy they have met with the Town Moderator to understand how to go forward with the Public Hearings.

**Bill:** Thank you and there is a lot of information here. So what I'm hearing is that the goal is to have Article 5 go forward at the Town Meeting?

**Amy**: Yes, that is the goal. We cannot predict what will happen, but yes, if we get everyone comfortable with what is going on, but if we can address some questions after Town Meeting, that might also be possible if everyone agrees.

**Kate:** Article 6 I understand is the back up plan if this new plan is not possible to go forward at Town Meeting. In Article 6, is the 3% structure increase? What is that exactly is it a COLA?

**Kellie**: yes, that is what has been outlined under article 6—built into the existing structure, with the existing plan that has been shared with everyone. But we'd look at Article 5 as what we want to go forward.

**Kate**: is GovHR taking into consideration the 3% increase as part of their planning? Or, does Article 5 take into account the 3%?

**Kellie:** Yes, they are working with FY 23 data. So GovHR is working with the assumption that 3% increase is already established and would be incorporated in the FY 24 budget.

**Amy**: confirms the same. It is first developed in the current year's data, and then ircorporates anything from 2023 as needed.

**Kellie**: One reason for that is that we've yet to assess the implementation costs for implementing the new system. So we're not able to assess what the cost impact will be and there may be some positions that are not being paid at the recommended level under the new system.

Amy: in re: to the cost impact—it's a combination of market and internal factors—it depends on how many positions that you have, some are benchmarked and some are not. So, just because a position salary range is recommended to be higher in the next plan—well, it does not mean that it was "below" market in the last system. It's tough to understand but that is the other reason that we'd not look only at market adjustments. It's a bAaronce we are taking to build a fair system. We have to look at the whole plan when we review how the new system will work.

**Bill**: so we should have these areas concluded by March 8<sup>th</sup>?

**Amy:** First we need to look at recommendations after the employee feedback. We need to understand what the consultants recommendations are first and then we have to recalculate. I guess we need to have that feedback before we can apply any market recommendations. We don't know yet how people will be responding. Maybe that is overly cautious?

**Kellie:** Yes, and I want to manage our expectations. The March 8<sup>th</sup>—we'll give you as much information as available and incorporating any feedback that we've received. At that meeting, we'd be discussing and then preparing any feedback into a draft final report.

Then, our last final date is April 5<sup>th</sup> for the FInCOm report to go to the printer. I guess March 8<sup>th</sup> is the last opportunity currently scheduled to understand how far along we will be at that point in time. But April 5<sup>th</sup> will be a milestone, where we hope to put the details into the FinCOm report.. But we don't know how it will be received.

Amy: We've certainly talked to the Town Manager and We'd like to get it into the Finance Committee Report and go out to all households. If not, we don't have to stop there, we can do handouts at Town Meeting, we can put it on the web or provide the information in various ways. If the FinCom report does not work, we still have other ways to include.

**Kellie:** I have included these dates in the schedule provided.

**Liz**: I'm going to jump in here. I don't see any clarification on the Communication plan for employees. You mentioned 2/21 as an employee meeting, but it's really important that we understand how the employees will be communicated with and the timing allowed for them to be allowed to comment. And then, if we look at 2/27, that is a Public Hearing, where the Personnel Board is responsible to present and stand behind these Articles. So before that time, we'd need a much better and clear picture of the actual work—and not just the project schedule which we see here, again. It is the responsibility of the Personnel Board to present these Articles to the Town. I take this responsibility very seriously but we've not seen any details on the work. Could you also please give us more details on the Employee Communication Plan as well as the actual work that has been done.

**Kellie**: A memo is to go out to all employees... invites them to employee meetings on the.... Confirmed 2/21<sup>st</sup> (10:00 am and 3:00pm) employee meetings that were just finalized today with the consultant. That will be a general memo that goes out to employees. GovHR would explain the outline of the reconsideration process would be outlined at that meeting.

In your packet, employee form is included.

**Liz:** I understood from our last meeting, when we also talked about the employee communications, that there would be a series of communications for employees, that is more than one communication, and at our last meeting in January, you also mentioned that each individual would also be getting an individual impact notification and then you need feedback from them on that part of the process. And when is that communication expected to go out? These hearings are not 1-1 meetings, not individualized discussions.

**Kellie**: Yes, GoveHR would explain the methodology and the reconsideration process will also be discussed then. There is a copy in your packet of the reconsideration request form and we'd have their feedback by March 3<sup>rd</sup> and then we'd incorporate that information in the plan before your March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Bill**: What I think would be helpful would be if we have a one-page chart that explains the communication plan overall—what has already occurred and what is coming up. It's difficult to parse through the project schedule to understand the communication schedule. It would be nice to have one piece of paper that you are currently verbalizing. Liz is right that we've talked about the importance of communication and it would be very helpful to see the plan.

**Liz**: sure, knowing what is to happen re: communication and having that separated out would be helpful. But if the reconsiderations are due on March 3, well, we've already stood by the article for the warrant on 2/27 at the Public Hearing. So, I'm concerned what we will be recommending when we have not seen any details. Or, does that imply that you are assuming no pushback? What recourse will individuals have if the Public Hearing has already moved forward the Article 5.

Amy: So, what would happen at the public hearing on 2/27? What was discussed with the Moderator, was to provide whatever updates are available at that time... and Joellen is available to do that. And a draft plan will have been sent out the week before on 2/21, with individual letters will have been received. But at the 2/27 Hearing, you will give an update—as much information as you have at that point to inform voters, but not at the point of making the final recommendation... what the progress is and what is expected... there is still employee feedback to come, etc. so not giving the final form at 2/27.

Amy: In terms of the communication, 2/21 will be the public forum and they will get individualized letters then. We are also speaking with Sr. management level, we are talking about "talking points/scripts" for how to speak with their teams....this whole thing re: employee feedback is happening now with GovHR and they are going to follow up on these individual requests. The consultant would be available to schedule discussions to respond to any questions that employees have. So we've got to see what happens with those discussions by March 8<sup>th</sup>. Then we can review what we get back from employees.

**Bill**: 2/27 meeting—I've asked Liz to be Chair for the day at that meeting. It seemed to me that we need to provide details on which article we would think we are going forward with. Technically, the motion for April 30<sup>th</sup> at Town Meeting will be either Article 5 or 6. Which will go forward has to be decided by the Personnel Board.

**Amy**: Yes, the Personnel Board has the responsibility to stand at Town Meeting and bring forward these Articles. In addition, another group could also put up an alternative article...anyone can, at Town Meeting.

**Liz:** Are you talking about the Town Meeting or the 2/27 Public Hearing?

**Amy:** The 2/27 is an information session only. It's at Town Meeting that anyone can stand and request an alternative be presented.

**Bill:** So we as the Personnel Board are charged to vet the details and have responsibility to present choose which article is brought forward. While anyone in Town could bring forward an article XXY, but we have the job of choosing from these articles.

**Amy**: yes. It's actually up to the Town Moderator to see if any amendments at Town Meeting part of these Articles or not.

**Kellie**: would like to clarify: are you suggesting that we compile a schedule for employee outreach and use it to inform the Personnel Board or is it to be used to help employees understand the communication plan? Who is the target audience for this request?

**Bill**: A communication plan that does both—informs us of the plan and informs employees of what is coming, when and what has already occurred.

**Liz:** Yes, it is for both audiences. I'm sure that part of a communication plan needs to provide employees important dates by which they have to take action. For us, we need to understand the volume of questions that come forward—and to understand that the due diligence has actually occurred. For example, a copy of the letters that went out. This kind of information would be very helpful to understand what has gone on.

Nancy: Which meetings can the Board attend? I think that is important.

Bill: Yes, which employee meetings can the Board members attend?

**Kate**: I have no issues. I feel as if the project schedule is sufficient for the employee communication plan. Having a clear outline for employees okay, but seems to all be there except perhaps the due date for their form. The memorandum is pretty clear, but I guess you could give them the deadline for questions. I think it's important, but it's all here. Clarified, sure, that's agreed.

**Bill**: Since we know that the communication has not been ideal with employees, I'd rather err on the side of overcommunication rather than under communicating.

**Kellie**; we do have a memo to send out employees and I guess we could put together a key dates schedule to give them with the next communication. We have a memo that we plan to send out to employees on the project, so we can include a key dates listing with the next employee update.

Amy: very helpful to hear different perspectives. As we all know, people look for different things.

**Bill**: I have one additional issue on the project schedule. On March 8<sup>th</sup>: What is the value of looking at Benefits Review project at this time? Is it necessary to do now? How does this align with the Classification and Compensation

**Kellie**: well, it was not part of the original project, we put it in as an addendum to the GovHR project. There were a number of items in the addendum, but we were looking at key points for comparison with other communities. It was Joellen that asked that we might ask the Personnel Board about the benefits program.... It was a courtesy to the Personnel Board—it does not have to be March 8<sup>th</sup>, but it is something that we'd need to review in order to close out the GovHR project. The timing is up to the Board, but it will be presented to you at some point.

Liz: RE: the benefits review project, Kellie, you indicated it was a "courtesy to the Personnel Board?" I'm not really sure why this would have come up this way, except re: what came up with the employee complaint last Fall. In terms of the benefits discussion in comparison across different communities—I would have assumed that what criteria would be assessed in such a comparison would be something that would come to the Personnel Board, but it has not at this point. comments; 2/27 presentation | | as a board, what is the plan for the PB to approve the GovHR work?

**Kellie:** A benefits review would really be seen as a separate project. A very detailed and intricate project- but we did not want it to distract from the Classification and Compensation project. I'd be happy to entertain more details about the benefits project, but was not sure that the Personnel Board was interested to hear more about this project. It will be very detailed, so not sure it is your focus.

**Liz**: So Bill, you'd raised the timing question—and it sounds as if this work won't impact the Articles that we are working on. I'd agree that we put it off therefore.

**Liz**: On a separate topic, I just don't see where the Personnel Board will be confident to stand by Article 5 before we have seen any details of the project. We've had several meetings where we've discussed the inputs to this project, but we have no details on the *output* of the project beyond project milestone dates. On the 2/27<sup>th</sup> Hearing, we don't really need to explain the inputs as much as we need to present the outputs from this project. As I'm so stand in for Bill on that day, I'd really like to understand what the project output is before I stand up in defence of this Article.

**Bill**: Agree, these are key issues to be addressed. I would like to understand the presentation that should go forward on 2/27.... I think we'll need help from Kellie and Amy to understand exactly where we are. I can try to spend some time on this to zero in on what we want to put forward on 2/27. I think the other point is —what is the plan that the Personnel Board is supposed to approve? It's not clear to me —I agree with Liz that we don't have to outline the 9 categories of inputs at the Public Hearing..

**Terri**: 2/27 is a public hearing---not just the Select Board... brief slides or speech—and take questions---and there will be questions about Articles 5 and 6<sup>th</sup>..... Q&A session in anticipation for Town Meeting. Most Committees come in with a brief speech with slides, and then questions. And in this case, there will be questions from both the Select Board and the Public. There will be confusion about Articles 5 and 6. You might get unexpected questions that will help you prepare for Town Meeting.

**Bill:** Thanks, very helpful. Minutes will reflect that the Personnel Board has to have a plan for approving the GovHR work and we don't have that plan ready tonight. I'll need help from the Personnel Board members to coordinate the feedback and understand what we need. Amy, they will have to have those comments sent to you and then you can present back to us the gathered information?

**Amy**: may need another meeting—a smaller group might also be feasible in advance of 2/27. Particularly, Liz could meet with GovHR to talk about the presentation for 2/27<sup>th</sup>. If we could get three people together, then we could hold a meeting.

**Bill:** I'm gone 2/20 on ---so I'd need to meet prior to that. Could we look at next week? Submit to Amy availability so we can schedule another meeting next week.

# 5. Personnel Board Charge & Authority Under Personnel Bylaw

- Continue development of recommendations to Select Board
- Next Steps

Note: Due to illness, this agenda item is postponed as Liz Cobbs was not able to draft/summarize comments on the Personnel Board Charge by this meeting.

Bill: We're not able to move forward with Agenda #5.

**Liz**: I've not a draft Charter to have people look at now.

Bill: Ok, then we've finished the agenda items. Is there any public comment at this time?

Laura Walsh 169 Thoreau Street. As a total novice, I'd wanted to understand what is happening—does the municipality have a union? Is anyone going to be adjusted down in the new Classification & Compensation system? I think you need to be clear and simple to share information? And every year they have been provided a COLA adjustment? Is there a way to average it out over several years? How does that compare to other towns? How many employees are you talking about? Do you know the

financial impact that will happen? What you have been talking about has been very difficult to understand—so please be sure to be clear and simple with your explanations to the public so that there is less confusion.

I'd like to better understand this information but in a way that is more digestible.

**Amy**: there are several unions, but not in this process. Yes, there is the potential for people to be downgraded. Generally, there is a COLA annually, but the amount differs. We are not clear yet on what the budget impact would be based on COLA adjustments.

Anita Teckle: if I understand correctly- you won't know before the hearing which article will go forward. The report won't have been completed by then; so, there are so many balls up in the air—a lot will happen between 2/27 and the deadlines for Town Meeting. What is the back up plan? If you end up not going ahead with the new plan because it is not ready in time, what is the back up? Fall Town Meeting? Special Town Meeting? Why not defer to a later special Town Meeting? It appears that you need another month. It seems now that it is rushed, when we've been waiting 14 years for this work. In sum, what is the back up plan?

**Bill**: Good question. As I understand it, it is to go with Article 6 as a back up plan.

Anita: Employees are going to expect movement on July 1st. So when would Article 5 go forward then?

**Bill**: As soon as possible is all I can think of: because if the Personnel Board is not ready to approve the work from GovHR then it will be necessary to go with Article 6.

Anita; Will you have had time to review and the Personnel Board to make the recommendation?

Bill: Any thoughts, Amy?

**Amy**: if the new Classification & Compensation plan is not going forward---would the Town be interested in a special Town Meeting? Or is there some way to adopt something under the ByLaw and have it ratified at the 2024 Town Meeting. I think the focus is still on moving the Article 5 that everybody is comfortable with to go forward at the 2023 Town Meeting.

**Anita:** it seems that it is the best we can do at this point---but with so many unknowns, Liz or whoever is being sent to the wolves on 2/27<sup>th</sup>.

Amy: right and on 2/21 we plan to have the public meeting for employees and go forward from there.

Anita; I'd like to suggest that if 2/27 does not go well. You might consider doing another public hearing again/separately to ensure that we get more clarity across to the public? It seems that you are sending Liz or whoever to the wolves at the Public Hearing without enough information. I'd suggest that you consider setting up a separate Public Hearing, involving the Select Board later.

**Bill**: Did not realize that is an option—great suggestion Amy, let's ask the questions now, rather than waiting a week to think of a plan C now, thanks to Anita's suggestion.

**Amy**: ok, we can pull that together next week.

**Bill:** Alright, thank you for the public participation and hope to have you at our next meeting as well.

**Liz:** Bill, it sounds as if we need to have 2 meetings next week—one with Joellen to focus on the 2/27 presentation and a second one for the Personnel Board to understand what level of detail is needed and how we will deflect as needed until details are appropriately organized.

**Amy**: please send me your availability and I'll check with Joellen too. I could set that up with Joellen to meet with Liz.

Bill: I will reach out to Joe and see when he might be available—

**Nancy**: Amy, Please send a reminder email to look at the schedules.

## 6. Adjournment

Bill: Okay ,let's adjourn at 7:50 pm.

## > VOTE:

Nancy: I take a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kate: Second.

Liz: Yes, Kate: Yes, Nancy: Yes, Bill: Yes

## Minutes approved 3/8/2023

## Documents used or referenced:

- Memo from Kellie Hebert Project Update: Classification & Compensation Study
- Project Schedule as of February 7, 2023
- Draft Memo to Employees from Kellie Hebert Project Update
- Sample Position Classification Reconsideration Form
- Excerpts from Warrant for Annual Town Meeting 2023 Articles 4, 5, 6
- Draft job descriptions: Senior Administrative Assistant (Finance), Administrative & Operations Supervisor, and Environmental Health & Safety Manager